enhance. On the other hand, the decision to invest in captive wind energy plants is basically a commercial decision which has no link with the technology upgradation of textile sector. Though in March, 2003 Government had allowed coverage of wind energy plants under TUFS, it was observed that it had resulted in subsidy for establishment of wind energy parks for supply of electricity to the Electricity Boards. In order to save this diversification of funds, Government reviewed its decision and coverage of wind energy plants was discontinued from TUFS w.e.f. 22.02.2005. This decision is not specific to any State and applies to throughout the country.

(d) Government have received a number of requests to review its decision. However, no decision has been taken to review it.

Import of readymade garments from India

3084. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the countries which are importing readymade garments like shawls/ knitwear etc. from India specially Ludhiana (Punjab);

(b) the value of export of readymade garments during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) the foreign exchange earned as a result thereof;

(d) whether Government have explored the possibility to increase the export; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) India's readymade garments, including shawl/knitwear, are exported to more than hundred countries of the world. However, the USA, EU Member States, U.A.E., Japan, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Hong Kong, Switzerland, Australia, etc. have been the major importing countries of our readymade garments.

(b)and (c) As per available Directorate General of Commerce Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI &S) data, the readymade garments exports during

the last three years *i.e.* 2001-02,2002-03 and 2003-04 has been given as below:—

(Value in US$ Million)

Year	Readymade garments including knitwears
April, 2001-March, 2002	4618.7
April, 2002-March, 2003	5334.3
April, 2003-March, 2004	5625.8

(d) and (e) Government has been taking a number of steps from time to time to boost exports of textiles, including readymade garments, from the country. Some of the important initiatives taken are:

(i) 100% Foreign Direct Investment is allowed in the textile sector under the automatic route.

(ii) The Government has de-reserved the readymade garments, hosiery and knitwear from the SSI sector.

(iii) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1.4.1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of the sector.

(iv) To improve the productivity and quality of cotton, Government has launched Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC). The Mission comprises four mini-missions, which are being jointly implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Textiles. One of the important ingredients of the Mission is to improve cotton processing facilities by upgrading/modernizing the existing ginning and pressing facilities and setting up of new market yards/improvement of existing market yards.

(v) The Government has launched a Centrally sponsored scheme titled "Apparel Park for Export Scheme" for imparting focused thrust for setting up of apparel manufacturing units of international standards at potential growth centres to give fillip to exports.

(vi) For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centres, a scheme titled "Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme" (TCIDS) has been launched.

(vii) The fiscal duty structure has been generally rationalised to achieve growth and maximum value addition within the country. Except for mandatory excise duty on man-made filament yarns and man-made staple fibres, the whole value addition chain has been given excise exemption option.

(viii) The imports of specified textiles and garment machinery items has been allowed at concessional rate of customs duty to encourage investments and to make our textile products competitive in the global market. The cost of machinery has also been reduced through fiscal policy measures.

(ix) Duty-free imports of 21 items of trimmings and embellishment items are allowed to the garment exporters, upto 3% of their actual export performance during the previous year.

(x) National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its six branches and Apparel Training and Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(xi) Facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories have been created to enable exporters to get the garments/textiles pre-tested for conforming to the requirements of importing countries.

Economic assistance to artisans and weavers

†3085. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have fixed a target for providing economic assistance to artisans and weavers under self employment credit card, scheme;

(b) the number of artisans and weavers benefited so far from the said scheme; and

(c) the scheme of Government to promote handloom knitted garments in view of termination of multi-fibre agreement in December, 2004?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) A target for issuance of one lakh Artisan Credit Cards (ACCs) has been

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.